Metre Gauge Line between Madurai and Madras

21. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the present Metre Gauge line between Madurai and Madras needs immediate conversion to Broad Gauge and proposals are pending before Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a heavy mounting road traffic in this important route due to various industries and commercial and educational institutions coming up; and

(c) the steps taken to take up this work on priority basis?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Metre Gauge line between Madras and Madurai is a vital link between the Metre Gauge rail system in Southern India and rest of the country. There is, therefore, no proposal for its conversion. However, work is in progress to provide a parallel BG line on Dindigul-Madurai MG Section. When completed, it will provide a BG route between Madras and Madurai via Salem, Erode, Karur and Dindigul.

Electrification of Railway Lines

22. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the programmes under consideration for electrification of important railway lines which have not been electrified so far; and

(b) by when these electrification programmes are expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Future Programme of electrification on Indian Railways is presently under consideration by a Committee constituted by the Planning Commission.

Inadequate Train Services in Konkan Region, Maharashtra

23. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the discontentment of the people living in Konkan Region of Maharashtra that the region is not adequately covered by Railways; and

(b) if so, whether Government have drawn up any programme to improve those services in the Konkan Region?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Final Location Survey for 837 km long BG line connecting Mangalore-Roha was done and the report with a memorandum was submitted to the Planning Commission in November 1988. Out of this, Planning Commission approved construction of Mangalore-Udupi (69.27 km.) portion in 1989-90 Budget as phase II of West Coast Line. Work is in progress.

Slum Population in Metropolitan Cities

24. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what was the slum population in the metropolitan cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi according to any recent assessment, at the end of 1988 and on 31st March, 1989;

(b) what is the percentage of rise in the slum population in these cities since 1981, year-wise and what is anticipated percentage of rise in the